

**Career Transition
Center**

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**"The longer I live the more
life becomes beautiful"**

- Frank Lloyd Wright

SECOND ACTS: CAREER PATHS FOR WORN-OUT EXECUTIVES



By Dana Mattioli, April 21, 2008
From the Wall Street Journal Online
(Reprinted with the permission of WSJ)

If you've been in the same industry for decades, changing careers might seem daunting. But, for many recovering executives, nonprofits, career coaching or making a clean break are all real options.

Golfing and gardening aren't as enticing as they once were. While baby boomers are increasingly becoming eligible for Social Security benefits, so far it seems that few are actually putting their working lives to bed.

According to an AARP survey, 79% of baby boomers plan to work in some capacity into their retirement years. But not all fifty something executives want to stay in the jobs, or industries where they spent most of their careers. Many are opting to step back from the long hours and stress of managerial roles in their golden years in favor of new and less time-consuming jobs.

Arnie Cogan left his career in graphic arts supply at age 53 to become a flight attendant, and later, an in-flight supervisor. A decade ago, Arnie Cogan, 64, exchanged a suit and tie, and a pay package that topped \$300,000 a year, for a flight attendant uniform and starting salary of about \$20,000 a year at Southwest Airlines. He now

works as an in-flight supervisor for the company at its Phoenix airport. "It's been the best job that I've ever had," says Mr. Cogan, who previously worked as vice president of a graphic arts supply company. In his vice president role, Mr. Cogan worked 60 hours a week and frequently attended dinner meetings. As a flight attendant he worked 30 hours a week, and in his new role he works 40 hours a week. For seasoned executives like Mr. Cogan, a slower lifestyle and less stress can trump a big corporate paycheck.

For other older careerists who have been downsized or are in need of a change, there are a variety of options. One of the top destinations for people seeking a second act according to a myriad of surveys: Nonprofits. Working for a charitable organization may provide a change of pace and rewarding work. Consulting is also a natural destination for executives looking to use the skills they've developed throughout their careers.

For others, career coaching is an increasingly popular field. And of course, some executives, like Mr. Cogan, are simply looking to make a clean break from their old work lives altogether. To experts, it's no surprise that many older career changers look to the nonprofit world for a second act. "This is a group that when they were young thought they wanted to change the world, and many put that on the backburner for 20 to 30 years while they climbed the corporate ladder," says Tamara Erickson, author of "Retire Retirement: Career Strategies for the Boomer Generation."

A survey by Civic Ventures, a San Francisco-based nonprofit, found that 58% of fifty somethings want a second-career

"If you don't fail now and again, it's a sign you're playing it safe."

- Woody Allen

that aids their community. But it's not just altruism at play. Having seasoned employees with business savvy come onboard is an asset for nonprofits, too, since they generally work with limited resources and rely heavily on volunteer work.

Nonprofits offer an opportunity to give back while moving away from the hours and stress of managerial positions. What's more, you don't need decades of specific experience to find a job. The nonprofit sector typically welcomes professionals from a wide range of industries, says Howard Seidel, a partner at Essex Partners, a career management and outplacement firm in Boston. "If I'm a financial services person and I'm looking into biotech, the chances are not impossible, but improbable," he says. "If I'm looking into the nonprofit area there is much more receptivity."

Nonprofits can also offer non-management roles with less stress and flexibility, giving executives time to pursue hobbies outside of the workplace. For the first time in years that might mean an end to answering incessant emails via Blackberry and dealing with the stress of being boss and watching the bottom line.

Rick Walleigh, 59, left a management position with a high-tech company to work for TechnoServe, a nonprofit that helps people in the developing world build businesses to break the cycle of poverty. When he first joined, he worked 40 to 50 hours a week, compared to the

60 to 70 hours a week he previously worked. He has since further cut back his hours to 25 a week. "Work is a lot more fun if you're not the one who is ultimately responsible for everything," says Mr. Walleigh. Still, like many businesspeople turned nonprofit employees, Mr. Walleigh struggled with letting go of the power and tendency to take control of situations. He says he frequently had to battle himself not to jump in and take the reins. Experts say many executives have a hard time relinquishing such power. "Some miss high-octane jobs; it's very addictive," says Tim Irwin, corporate psychologist and author of "Run With the Bulls Without Getting Trampled."

Giving up the trappings of power, such as administrative assistants and other perks, could also take some getting used to. Irene Stillings, 68, executive director of the California Center for Sustainable Energy, was faced with making her own photocopies, arranging her travel plans (this time flying coach) and other administrative duties. The former business-development executive says it's a small price to pay to be able to do work that makes a difference. "Everyone wants to feel that they're contributing to a better world, and in this position I really am," she says of the nonprofit, which provides education and services to help people "green" their lives.

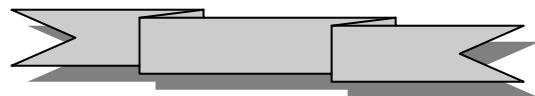
If you want even more flexibility in your second act, independent consulting is ideal because you can stick with your areas of expertise and set your own hours, says Eric Winegardner, vice president of client adoption at job site Monster.com. Don't overlook your current employer when it comes to consulting, either says Mr. Winegardner. Many com-

panies allow employees to stay on the payroll as contract workers for 20 or so hours a week. If you plan to leave your employer, networking is critical to spread the message that you're looking for new opportunities. Rather than sending a mass email to everyone you know, Mr. Winegardner suggests making an update to your employment status on social-networking sites you belong to.

For worn-out execs who want to draw on their knowledge and career experience in a different way, career coaching is an option, as long as mentoring younger professionals is up your alley, says Brad Sugars, CEO of ActionCOACH, a franchised business coaching company with locations in 26 countries.

The majority of people looking to become business coaches with his company are from the boomer generation, he says. After going through training, coaches are able to set their own hours, which appeals to many older professionals. Like Mr. Cogan who turned to the airline industry, some decide to ditch their former careers and pick up an entirely new one. After being bought out of his vice president position at a bank, Joel Orner, 68, enrolled in culinary school at the age of 64, and is now executive chef at the Los Angeles Yacht Club.

Although he initially found the transition of going back into school difficult, he says the hard work has paid off because he is able to pursue his passion. "I do better in a creative, happy position than I did in the banking business because I thought it was much less friendly," says Mr. Orner.



Tap Existing Skills, Old Ties When Changing Your Career

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.

- Aristotle

Past Job May Offer Valuable Resources For Easier Transition

By AMY PALANJIAN, April 21, 2008
From the Wall Street Journal Online
(Reprinted with Permission)

After working 16-hour days for seven years as an investment banker, Rachel Thebault decided to follow her dream: a career in baking. All it took for her to make the leap from banker to baker was a batch of chocolate truffles.

Ms. Thebault had been baking as a hobby since she was a child. But the demands of her full-time job gave her little time to bake for fun -- let alone for a living. That all changed after she cooked up some chocolate truffles for a New Year's Eve party. Almost immediately, friends began putting in orders of truffles and cakes for their parties and weddings.

In 2004, Ms. Thebault decided to leave her job at Bank of America Corp. for culinary school, and now, with the help of her financial background, she has her own bakery. "It was a huge step for me to give up such a lucrative career that I was successful in to go back to school in a new field," says the 32-year-old Ms. Thebault.

Leaving a steady job in hopes of making a career out of a personal passion has its challenges. But leveraging what -- and who -- you already know can make the transition easier. Ms. Thebault regularly taps her investment-banking skills as she

works to build her own baking business.

"Being able to understand income statements, balance sheets and how the financial structure of a business works has been very helpful," she says.

After graduating from culinary school, she rented space in a commercial kitchen to make special-order cakes, cupcakes, truffles and cookies as a way to ease into commercial baking. As an investment banker, Ms. Thebault spent years working with retail and restaurant clients and had a strong idea about what made the successful ones tick -- and what doomed the lackluster ones. When she decided to move into a storefront shop, Ms. Thebault says her finance background gave her the know-how to set up a business plan and determine her target market.

Her previous career also gave her a valuable resource: contacts and colleagues from her banking and college days she could call for tips on marketing and strategy, and legal advice. Using that bridge from her old career, Ms. Thebault opened a bakery, Tribeca Treats, in New York City a year ago.

Ms. Thebault isn't alone in taking that big step to switch careers. A study by out-placement consulting firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas Inc. found that nearly 40% of all job seekers in 2007 weren't just looking for a new employer, they also were hoping to switch to a new industry. And a survey of job hunters conducted

last year by Salary.com revealed that nearly 60% of respondents wanted to change careers.

While Ms. Thebault's path might seem long -- about three years -- it is quite typical. A career reinvention takes an average of three to five years to complete, says Pamela Mitchell, founder and chief executive of the Reinvention Institute, a coaching and consulting firm in Miami.

Ms. Mitchell advises clients to stay in their current careers -- and continue to draw a salary -- for as long as possible while they develop a clear plan for their next profession. In some cases, you might be able to use that time to look for experiences in your current job that you can take with you. One client Ms. Mitchell worked with wanted to become a full-time writer after a 10-year career in the non-profit world. "When she looked around at her current job, she realized that she could work on internal projects that would connect her to contacts she would need to know in the future," says Ms. Mitchell.

Finding part-time or volunteer work in your dream career can be a low-risk introduction to a new industry -- and will help build experience. Nina Storm, 33, always had a passion for causes and wanted to join the nonprofit world. She was working as a casting coordinator for Universal Pictures when she heard about and became interested in Global Green USA, an environmental nonprofit.

She joined the group's new Los Angeles committee as a way to learn more about the organization. "As a volunteer, I formed relationships with the staff and I became more confident in skills which -- at that point -- weren't represented on my

"Everyone thinks of the changing world, but no one thinks of changing himself. "

- Leo Tolstoy



résumé," Ms. Storm says. After volunteering for a year, including working as a planner for the group's Pre-Oscar Party, she interviewed to be the group's event coordinator. She landed the job and now, a year and a half later, Ms. Storm is Global Green's events manager, producing six or more large events around the country each year.

Dipping your toes into a new career while still collecting a corporate paycheck also can open your eyes to a reality. Ms. Thebault warns of: "When you turn your passion into your career, it becomes a job." That may mean dealing with budgets, marketing, hiring and firing -- the less-scintillating aspects of the work that you probably never faced when, say, baking for friends and family.

To avoid a rude awakening, it is wise to look before leaping, experts say. Talk to someone who does your dream job to help determine whether you can be satisfied by being part of the process -- working to keep your bakery running rather than doing all of the baking yourself. Ask them about the downsides. "Otherwise, doing the thing you once loved will be the worst job you've ever had," says Ms. Mitchell. Nina Storm first volunteered with a nonprofit to gain insight and experience before leaving her career in Hollywood casting. That isn't the case for Elizabeth Vianna, 41, who turned a recreational interest in wine into a career she loves. She decided to leave her job as a clinical toxicologist at New York Hospital-

Cornell Medical Center after a particularly good glass of French wine Sociando-Mallet.

Ms. Vianna had been going to tastings for years when an idea hit her: She could put her background in science to use in making wine. She abandoned her plan to attend medical school, moved to wine country and enrolled in the graduate program in enology at the University of California, Davis, a decade ago. Ms. Vianna worked through two internships and held two assistant winemaking positions before landing her current job as winemaker at Chimney Rock in the Napa Valley in 2005.

"Work doesn't feel so much like work anymore," says Ms. Vianna, who primarily makes Bordeaux varieties for Chimney Rock. "Like any job, there are times when it's stressful, but at the end of the day, I'm amazed at what an enchanting way of making a living I have found."



FAST TRACK YOUR JOB SEARCH THROUGH PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

**By Joe Turner, March 1, 2008
Published in the Vault.com
(Reprinted with permission)**

If you're looking to expand your job

search, you'll eventually face this question:

"Where can I find people who'll talk with me?"

This is a question most job seekers have to grapple with when the well runs dry and they're at a loss for new jobs to apply for.

How about professional associations? It's been said, "there is a professional association for almost everything you do." Every industry, profession, specialty, or trade most likely has at least one professional association. These organizations perform various roles such as public relations liaison to the media, maintaining professional standards and establishing a vision for the future of their profession or industry.

These organizations can be a great conduit for inside information, overall trends and new developments. This also includes the latest scoop on job opportunities, but you must be a member. If you're not already a member of an association that represents your job title or professional position, join one as you may be missing out on a great deal of insider info. The perfect resource to research organizations is a reference called *Associations Unlimited*.

This is a database containing profiles of approximately 460,000 international and U.S. national, regional, state, and local nonprofit membership organizations in all fields, including IRS data on U.S. 501(c) nonprofit organizations. According to their publisher, *Associations Unlimited* contains descriptive info on over 22,000 U.S. national associations, 25,000 inter-

national associations, 110,000 U.S. regional, state and local associations, plus over 300,000 U.S. 501(c) nonprofit organizations, agencies and service programs.

You'll find contact information, e-mail, web sites and links to each association's descriptive materials plus info on meetings, conventions and conferences.

Don't waste time Googling this resource, because it's available only on a subscription basis. The good news is that you can access it free from your local library, as many library reference sections include this reference work. In fact, if you have a valid library card, you can access *Associations Unlimited* online through your library website once you've entered your card number.

The bottom line is this: professional associations are a great resource for networking with members of your own profession, trade, or job title. Their members are employees, managers and executives who are working in the very same corporations, small companies and organizations to which you're applying.

In fact, your dream job could be within one of these very companies because many hiring managers will also be members of their professional associations. What better time to meet them than when they're "off-duty" and you're on a more equal footing?

If appropriate for you, join the organization. It most likely has a local chapter in your city or close by. Get on their mailing list and into the loop. Professional associations can be one of the best avenues to get on the inside and to reap referrals and leads for opportunities that will never

make it to the outside world. As they say, "membership has its privileges."

Author of Job Search Secrets Unlocked, Joe has interviewed on radio talk shows and offers free insider job search secrets at: www.jobchangesecrets.com.



INTERVIEWING AUTHENTICALLY

By Barbara Safani 12/05/07
Published in TheLadders.com
(Reprinted with permission)

The goal of the interview is to showcase your accomplishments while developing a relationship with the hiring manager. The quality of the relationship hinges on the job seeker's ability to construct credibility for their candidacy and, therefore, effectively gain the hiring manager's trust. Despite this relationship-building goal, many job seekers continue to "spin" their responses to interview questions. This tactic is often used when job seekers are asked questions with a negative slant such as "What is your greatest weakness?" or "Tell me about a mistake you made."

Perhaps candidates spin their answers in an effort to downplay any blemishes in their background or to stick with the strategy that so many interview preparation books teach. Either way, candidates that lack authenticity are easy to spot, and the outcome of the interview is severely com-

promised when job seekers chose to use this falsified approach.

As a matter of fact, in a recent Society for Human Resources Management survey, recruiters and hiring managers reported that one of their biggest pet peeves during an interview was candidates who responded to difficult interview questions with answers that attempted to spin a tough situation into one with only positive outcomes.

Below are a few of the most common interview questions to which job seekers try to spin their responses.

1. What is your greatest weakness?

Red flag answer: "I'm a perfectionist, and I get frustrated when people aren't as committed to the job as I am."

Problem: The candidate is answering the question about a weakness by responding with an answer that suggests a strength. Such answers are disingenuous and are not well-received by hiring authorities -- the candidate hasn't answered the question asked, but turned the question into one that he or she would rather answer.

The candidate is also assuming that perfection is considered a desirable trait in the organization. Some hiring managers will perceive a perfectionist as someone who gets so caught up in the details that they can't achieve objectives.

Adjusted response: "Earlier in my career, when I was a software developer, my strong attention to detail was an asset because I could quickly spot and correct systems errors. But after I was promoted to project manager, this strength became

a bit of a liability because I was now responsible for delegating work and overseeing the big picture aspect of the project. I struggled at first because it was my nature to want to fix every error. While I still have that tendency, I now rely on the technical expertise of my team, which allows me to concentrate on delivering projects on time and on budget."

2. Tell me about a situation where you did not get along with a supervisor.

Red flag answer: "I've been very fortunate and have never worked for someone I didn't get along with."

Problem: Everyone has had situations where they disagreed with a boss, and saying that you haven't forces the interviewer to question your integrity. Also, it can send out a signal that the candidate is not seasoned enough or hasn't been in situations that require him to develop a tough skin or deal with confrontation.

Adjusted response: "It's natural for people to have differing opinions. When this has occurred in the past, I have presented my reasons for my position and openly listened to my supervisor's opinion as well. Recently, my supervisor recommended a change to a report that in my opinion made the reporting more cumbersome and time consuming.

I expressed my concerns, but also asked many questions to determine what information my boss needed to capture that was not currently in the report. Once I understood her needs, I was able to offer a suggestion that satisfied her information needs and actually streamlined the existing report making it easier to use."

3. Describe a situation where you were

part of a failed initiative.

Red flag answer: "I've never had a project that failed. My supervisors have always praised my work."

Problem: If you can't discuss a failure or mistake, the interviewer might conclude that you don't possess the depth of experience necessary to do the job. The interviewer is not looking for perfection.

They're trying to better understand your level of responsibility, your decision making process, your ability to recover from a mistake, what you learned from the experience, and if you can take responsibility for your mistakes.

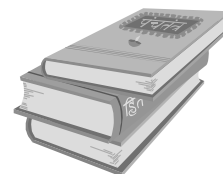
Adjusted response: "Everyone makes mistakes. I'd like to think that I have learned something valuable from every mistake I've made. In my previous role as marketing director, I launched a product and was disappointed in the initial sales results. I realized that we had launched too quickly and needed to do additional market research to determine the needs of multiple demographics within our market. Following the research initiative, the marketing was realigned with a niche demographic and sales doubled within a year."

By developing and practicing honest, thoughtful responses to difficult interview questions, you will create a realistic and authentic portrait of your candidacy and develop a strong rapport with the hiring authority. Building a trusting relationship will help you advance to the next round in the interview process and bring you one step closer to securing the position.

[Barbara Safani](#), owner of [Career Solvers](#), has over ten years of experience in ca-

reer management, recruiting, executive coaching, and organizational development. She is a triple certified resume writer and frequent contributor to numerous career-related publications.

EDITOR'S NOTES



BOOKS

Losing the Golden Hour: An Insider's View of Iraq's Reconstruction

By James Stephenson with a foreword by Richard L. Armitage

"About The Authors: "James "Spike" Stephenson is a retired senior Foreign Service officer with twenty-eight years' experience in rebuilding states at war or recovering from war. He was USAID mission director in Lebanon and in Serbia and Montenegro prior to assuming the position in Iraq. He also served in Egypt, Grenada, and El Salvador. A decorated Vietnam War veteran, Stephenson is a recognized expert on post-conflict transition, civilian-military cooperation, and counterinsurgency. Currently he is a senior adviser for security and development at Creative Associates International, Inc. He lives near Charlottesville, Virginia.

"Foreword by the Honorable Richard L. Armitage. Armitage is a former Deputy Secretary of State and Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs."

"Selected for the Diplomats and Diplomacy Book Series of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and Dip-

lomatic and Consular Officers, Retired.

From the publisher's website (<http://www.potomacbooksinc.com/>):

"Description:

"In emergency medicine, "the golden hour" is the first hour after injury during which treatment greatly increases survivability. In post-conflict transition terminology, it is the first year after hostilities end. Without steadily improving conditions then, popular support declines and chances for economic, political, and social transformation begin to evaporate.

"James Stephenson believes we have lost Iraq's golden hour. A veteran of post-conflict reconstruction on three continents, he ran the Iraq mission of the Agency for International Development in 2004-05 with more than a thousand employees and expatriate contractors. The Coalition Provisional Authority, which oversaw the largest reconstruction and nation-building exercise ever, was a dysfunctional organization the Department of Defense cobbled together with temporary employees and a few experienced professionals from the State Department and other agencies. Iraqis soon became disillusioned, and the insurgency grew.

"Losing the Golden Hour tells of hubris, incompetence, courage, fear, and duty. It is about foreign assistance professionals trying to overcome the mistakes of an ill-conceived occupation and help Iraqis create a nation after decades of despair. Neither criticizing nor defending U.S. foreign policy, Stephenson offers an informed assessment of Iraq's future.



ATTENTION, JSP GRADS!

CTC recently emailed JSP participants our Biennial Job Search Program Survey. We are hoping for a great response from our 1400 plus subscribers. You can easily respond online and it only takes a few minutes! We will publish the results in our monthly newsletter.

VOLUNTEER AUTHORS?

We are looking for graduates to share their experiences on working for a think tank, negotiating work hours and benefits, reinventing yourself, starting a small business, or other topics of your choosing.

PHOTOS

We welcome photos of you in your new lives! We post these photos on the CTC bulletin board and use them in our presentations. Please email to CTC (HayesP@state.gov) an "action" shot of you in "retirement."

JOB FAIR

Mark your calendars! Our next job fair will be held on Tuesday, August 26, 2008 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm in the gymnasium of Building D (aka the Field House) at FSI in Arlington, Virginia. Be sure to bring a photo ID and, if you have one, your Retiree ID.

JOB LEAD REFERRALS

Thanks to all of you have passed on job referrals for the JSP participants. There are some terrific opportunities out there and some of our most interesting job referrals come from you!

Golfers—Mark your Calendars: The 2008 DSF—Mike Considine Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, July 7th at The Golf Club at Landsdowne. Plan to join us for one of the area's premier golf events! Always a sell-out, check the Foundation's website for information about registration and sponsorships. The Website is: www.ds-foundation.com.

If distance keeps you away please consider joining up in spirit by being a hole sponsor. The golf tournament has a great group of corporate sponsors, but we are always looking to increase our fundraising goals. Should you have a relationship with a corporate entity that might be interested in sponsoring this event or have questions about participation, please contact Elizabeth Bell, manager@ds-foundation.com.

The Diplomatic Security Foundation
(DSF) was founded in 1995 as a

charitable, non-profit organization to provide financial assistance to the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) personnel and other colleagues in the law enforcement and foreign affairs communities. DSF is a 501 © (3) non-profit organization. With its global network and outreach, DSF is often uniquely placed to offer timely and much needed assistance to those in need.



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